

*Washington, DC* - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today applauded a decision by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to alter its Major Disaster Declaration by making Orange County eligible for Public Assistance. Hinchey last week sent a letter to President Obama requesting the designation, which will allow federal assistance to be provided to repair damaged infrastructure, and continued lobbying senior administration officials until the designation was provided.

"I am pleased FEMA has made Orange County eligible for Public Assistance," said Hinchey. "Just yesterday my office spoke directly with Phil Parr, the President's National Federal Coordinating Officer for federal recovery operations in New York State, to make sure this designation was approved. Since the storm first hit last week, I've been working closely with local, county, state and federal agencies to ensure that everyone affected by this storm gets the assistance they need. This latest designation will help ensure Orange County's roads, bridges and other infrastructure are repaired and rebuilt."

Following the hurricane, Hinchey worked to ensure that counties in the Congressional District he represents have the disaster declarations necessary to receive federal assistance. Last week, Hinchey led 19 of his House colleagues in requesting an expanded disaster declaration from President Obama. Prior to that, he sought an emergency disaster declaration for Dutchess County and brought the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to Ulster County to tour flooded areas.

Hinchey says the next phase in the process will be helping New Yorkers navigate the disaster recovery process. "My offices have been working tirelessly to help individuals and businesses throughout the region get the help they need," he said. "Anyone who is having trouble with this process should contact one of my offices today. I'm going to do everything I can to help."